



SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY

Number 55

Oct. 1997

All Aboard !!

Our workdays for October are Wednesday evening, **October 8** at Cal Poly, starting @ 6:00 P. M. and at the Swanton Ranch, Saturday morning, **October 11**, and Saturday morning, **October 25**, starting @ 9:00 A. M.

On Track

with your Director,
Ed Carnegie

If you count the number of workdays and runs over the past few weeks, Swanton Pacific has had something going on for five weekends in a row! (Yet, yes there still is life outside of Swanton.) The first workday in September was very busy with a lot of interesting events happening. The John Deere lawnmower had a mishap that required that the lawn be mowed the "old fashioned way" and hand raked; thanks go out to Mac Gaddis, Martha, Vera, and Mary Ann. I am happy though to report that the mower is now repaired and operating again. We sure did get spoiled with our modern day conveniences—sit down mower with baskets to catch the grass. Some other members on the same workday tried a destructive test on one of the Car Barn doors, and only verified that the 502 engine is definitely stronger than a barn door!

The roundhouse is presently having the ceiling insulated and dry wall installed. A carpenter was hired, and some members assisted, but the job is completed. Bill McNab and I painted one of the bays, but decided to wait until all the drywall was finished before continuing with the painting. All the other bays of the roundhouse need to be primed and finished. Soooooo let me know if you like to paint, because there are over 2200 sq. ft. in the round house that need painting. The new ceiling sure makes the roundhouse look larger, as well as brighter—guess we won't be able to call the crew in there the "cave people" any more!

If anyone was watching us work at Swanton these past few weeks it looked like "Spring cleaning" but only being done in the "Fall". Two full truck loads went to the dump. A lot of "stuff" that we don't need is gone and a lot of other "stuff" has been cleaned up. The area under the trees next to the cabooses was raked clean. The old pump that has been laying on its side for many a moon was placed upright and put together. Bill McNab supplied some paint, Cal Poly colors of course, and Mary Ann painted the pump. She calls it her still life of R2D2 (AKA as Byron). In fact, the next morning, after the pump was set up, Barney, our dog, attacked and barked at it for quite some time when he saw it for the first time. One of the train-station waiting benches was refinished, varnished & almost looks brand new again. Three new 16 ft. tables were also built and water sealed in the picnic grounds. That now makes a total 8 new tables this year. They sure made it nice for all of the events we have been hosting.

In addition to all the other work going on, about half the track from the yard switch toward the meadow was repaired. Ties were replaced, ballast, leveled and aligned.

A Board meeting was held Sunday morning after the **work day**, see the **minutes** from the meeting later on in this newsletter.

On Sunday, 20th of September, we hosted a wedding for two Cal Poly alumni. The roundhouse, under the direction of Marty Campbell, operated the 502 for the wedding party.

The second workday of the month was right before the Land Trust/Conservancy picnic so all those last minute preparations for getting ready were occurring, in addition to workday "stuff". Lou Haughney, as usual had everything set up for the crowds to get educated about the history of Swanton and of Al Smith. The shirt, and sales of other miscellaneous items, crew certainly earned their wages—with over \$400 dollars in sales. One of the wig-wags that had been sitting around got "derusted" and painted. The track crew inspected, cleaned,

and made adjustments to fine tune the track for a busy schedule of track runs the next day. After a small derailment at the end of the workday, other adjustments were made. The roundhouse crews worked on polishing, cleaning and getting the engines ready for the next day as well. Randy Jones and his crew installed train brakes on the 502 and the 1914. It was really nice knowing that under any conditions that you had brakes on most of the cars. Randy also set up the train brakes for a slow normal stop position. The car barn crew, under the leadership of Fitz FitzPatrick, finished the air lines and brakes for all the pasengers cars. Show time came and went, and there were no glitches this year. According to the Land Conservancy people about 850 people were fed and that many or more rode trains all day. It was a very successful day and everyone appeared to have a **great family outing with antique cars**, and other steam engines there as well.

Based on the Swanton bylaws, under Article V, Section L--an election committee met the last weekend in September in order to come up with a slate of names for nominations of the various offices for the Swanton RR Society. Nominations for officers are to close in October, for elections by the general membership, which are to be held in November. I assume the names of the candidates and offices they seek are to be presented at the October 11 workday. Ballots for voting will be sent out to the general membership in November.

The day after the Land Trust Run, Tom Vertel, Art Laidlaw, and myself got the freshly painted wig-wag installed. A concrete slab for it's mechanical box was also poured and is "setting up" so that the box can soon be placed on top of it. It is our hopes to have it up and running for the 2472 run in October.

**Board Meeting
November 9, 1997
Swanton Pacific
Redhouse 0830**

Minutes of Swanton Pacific Railroad Board Meeting

Swanton Pacific Ranch - Redhouse
Sunday, September 13, 1997

Members Present:

Elmer Stone, Geoff Tobin, Ed Carnegie, John Tomlin, Marty Campbell, Randy Jones, Andy McLean, Martha Neilsen.

Guests:

Fred/Tom Vertel, Mary Ann Carnegie

President, Marty Campbell, called the meeting to order at 8:50AM. Order of business/reports were as follows:

Treasurer's Report (ED CARNEGIE)

The balance in the operating budget as of 8/31/97 is \$1,433 which is the lowest it has ever been--but expense have been for:

Ties \$17,000

Water System for Swanton\$ 5,000

Amount withdrawn from earnings of endowment
\$10,000 to cover outstanding P.O's

Another draw will be taken 9/30/97 of \$18,000

Presently the organization has 99 paid members; 31 members from last year did not renew their memberships. Reminder notices of their possible "derailment" were sent out so it is just a fact that we need to live with.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

According to the bylaws it is up to the President to select a chairman for the committee. Marty will make sure that a chair is selected who will put a committee of members together. One of the upcoming newsletters will announce the candidates and have a ballot for members to vote on their choice.

UPCOMING EVENTS: (ED CARNEGIE/MARTHA NEILSEN)

September 20 there will be a wedding on the grounds. Andy McLean, John Tomlin and Marty Campbell will run the diesel. Randy Jones will be on site should they need him.

September 27/28--regular workday prior to next day's Santa Cruz Land Trust/Conservancy run. Andy McLean presented an outline of how the runs were to be done and what crews were to be on what engines.

October 5 we will host the Lonestar Company picnic. The diesel engine will be used with Andy McLean and Ed Carnegie as working crew.

October 11/12--regular workday, followed with the run for the 2472 group on Sunday. Paul A "Justy" of KGO Channel 7 has contacted us to do a special on Swanton

and the trains. Will be on the grounds either 9/28 or for the 2472 run. Ed will confirm later this week.

SAFETY REPORT: (ANDY MCLEAN)

Items that need to be worked on are as follows:

- a. establish a safety fence at the station
- b. work on improving the toe paths around switch stands
- c. obtain switch locks or at least "s" hooks for all switches -- need to lubricate (with graphite) all locks [Elmer Stone will take care of graphiting]
- d. move switch stands out to end of the headties
- e. install operational air brakes both independent and train
- f. have locking hand-brakes on all equipment
- g. additional work is needed on the turntable pit rail supports, as well as install a fence around it on the parking lot side
- h. look into having an oil house and gasoline storage area--need to see where the new water system will be installed so that these items will not be at the same level. Geoff Tobin will look into purchasing two Calgo containers to take care of this simply.

TRACK REPORT: (ELMER STONE)

New ties around the turntable, other areas were raised and tapped. Track lining will be done before the Land Trust run. The yellow flag will hopefully be pulled at Windy Point and Cosgrove, otherwise we will have to deal with "Mother nature's own course". As usual there is always track to line and raise as well as siding.

EQUIPMENT REPORT: (RANDY JONES)

- a. Mechanical - Air brakes:
Fitz has looked at all the covered cars, checked out their undersides, and the steel undersiding of some is worse than others--work will be prioritized based on their conditions
- b. 3 new open cars: trucks will be modified to fit our track--since they are in better condition than our other covered cars, work will commence on them first
- c. Generator for steam engines: Strasburg Co. in Colorado has a 12 volt, 33 amp turbine [a sketch was presented] 9" high x 18" costs were \$1800 @ in quantities of 3 and \$2,200 w/fly ball governor. Concerns expressed over the generator were its proportions vs. is it prototypical. Alternate solution was to look into using an alternator and use its horsepower off the main cylinder. Space may be a problem here.
- d. Open Cars: air pipes throughout; an emergency braking system is needed
- e. Locomotives:
 1. 502-has a functioning train air valve connection; need to work on torch converter,

transfer case, trucks and air lines; keep eye on fluid levels as she leaks--part of the rebuild

2. 1914-need to upgrade its valve, water glass needs maintenance, and get scale out of the burner, work on connecting rod as brass causes noise and wear & tear on the engine. Otherwise, they are operationally up to snuff
3. 1913-needs to be cleaned up--Marty working on this. Wheels need to be turned--will do at Cal Poly.
4. Motorcar: check on the pump from Sunstrand whose office is in Tracy, CA (Geoff Tobin to research out-free wheel vs. coast) Long term to look into a mechanical drive system and not a hydraulic one, per Randy Jones.
- f. Upcoming work:
Get better organized so that projects, can get prioritized with project boards [magnetic dry boards]--trying to obtain at cost or better. Will obtain for machine shop(for needs/wants list), roundhouse (2-3 boards for locomotives/maintenance schedule/responsibilities); one for the carbarn area for status on all the cars. John Tomlin to take over the roundhouse's organization. Work on an Open air pit-survey it out

OPERATING CLASSES: (REFER TO HAND OUT GIVEN BY JOHN TOMLIN)

OTHER ITEMS UNDER DISCUSSION:

General Code of Operating Rules presented by Andy McLean: (list of possible amendments/exceptions to coincide with Swanton RR was presented --see list on file. Andy will go through them with a committee (John Tomlin, Elmer Stone, Andy McLean) to amend them to fit with Swanton RR and present to the Board at a later date.

FRED was questioned--AKA **Federal Regulation End Device**--should we use a flashing red light/bicycle light, markers, lights or red reflectors--**NO it was decided to use red flag.**

12 Hour Rule:

Motion: [EJC] It was moved to strike the 12 hour limit from Swanton rules. Seconded-Elmer Stone. Passed. Andy McLean to write the exception.

502 OPERATOR:

MOTION: [RJ] It was moved to have Andy McLean considered to be "qualified by executive order pending formal training-grandfathered in" as an operator for the 502 engine. Seconded-Geoff Tobin. Passed.

AE 141-TRACTORS CLASS can be precedent for pre-qualification to operating heavy equipment. However, each individual that has taken the class and wishes to operate heavy equipment at Swanton will still need to be checked out by Ed Carnegie on each piece they plan to operate.

CORRECTED LISTS OF WHO CAN OPERATE WHAT will be updated and posted.

SUPERVISION OF MACHINE SHOP

MOTION: [EJC] That Geoff Tobin accepts responsibility and supervision of the machine shop. Seconded-Martha Neilsen. Passed.

LIGHTS ON EVERYTHING OR NO LIGHTS:

DISCUSSION Since we operate on a private right away with no crossings, we therefore do not have to use lights. Lights are not required, except at night.

MOTION: [GT] Lights on all engines are optional during the daytime, but required at night. Seconded-Elmer Stone. Passed.

It was also mentioned that whoever puts engines away, should make sure that all lights are shut off i.e., running, headlights, etc.

CONDUCTOR'S EXAM: Review for any changes, approved by the Board as is.

PHOTOGRAPHS: Marty Campbell to find a good photo depicting Swanton RR and have developed to be sold as postcards by the Land Trust Day and to have available thereafter.

NEXT BOARD MEETING :

November 9, 1997
0830-Redhouse

Adjournment: 12:00 NOON

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ann Carnegie
Acting Secretary for Jim Matheny

In the Caboose

with your Historian,
Lou Haughney

Following is an article that was found and we thought the members would like to read what Al Smith had to say about Swanton.

As told by Al Smith, July, 1990

Indian Days -

Most of the Indian activity of the Central California Ohlone Tribe took place in the canyon or valley to the north, Waddell Creek, which runs east and west and has a greater beach area. Some evidence such as shell piles and grinding stones, show that the Scott Creek area was visited also.

Mexican Land Grant -

On November 2, 1843, Ramon Rodriguez and Francisco Alviso were granted "a square league of land", more or less, by Manuel Micheltoarena, Mexican Governor of California. It was described as running from Arroyo Puerca to the Canada de Las Trancas on south and north, to the Sierra on the east, and the Pacific Ocean on the west. On Mrch 1, 1867, President Andrew Johnson issued a patent confirming the ownership. The grant was named Rancho Agua Puerca Y Las Trancas. With all the beautiful Spanish language to chose from, ir literally means Hog Water and the Bars. Agua Puerca probably refers to the stagnant water in the stream which comes out at Davenport Landing, the original southerly boundary; and Las Trancas refers to placing poles for a gate or barrier in a narrow canyon just south of Waddell Creek. An interesting sidelight is that in the translation of the description to English, the transcriber recognized the word Sierra and left that as the northeasterly boundary instead of using "mountain ridge". Some smart lawyer could have laid claim to a strip through Modesto.

The land passed through several ownerships and ended up in the hands of James Archibald, who farmed it. He arranged for a Swiss dairyman, Ambrogio Gianone, to run the dairy. Mr. Gianone built the cheese house (in 1867) and had some shipwrecked ship's carpenters build the barn (in the late 1880's) at the south end of the valley, which stands today. (Approximately one-third of the westerly end of the barn blew off in a severe storm.) Later Mr. Gianone bought the north third of the rancho, where Swanton Road crosses back over the ridge. It is known locally as Gianone Hill, and there are two families with fourth generation children living there today.

Mr. Archibald complicated matters by dying in Scotland in 1875. By the time the dust settled from a two-year lawsuit, Mrs. Archibald sold out to Joseph Bloom, who lined up water rights and farmed the valley. Homestead land was also available and settlers moved right up to the Mexican Land Grant line, which replaced the Sierra designation. (The line is still visible on aerial photos of the area today. Many of these families are still here. One homesteader was the Staub Family, great grandparents of Bud and Lud McCrary of Big Creek Lumber.

The Beginnings of Swanton -

Fred Swanton, who built the Boardwalk and was an early mayor of Santa Cruz, was an early enthusiast of hydro-electric power. He built a powerhouse on Big Creek, dams on Mill Creek and Big Creek, and several miles of flume. The plant produced electricity from 1899 to 1948. In that year a forest fire burned the flume, and it was abandoned. It was the first plant of the Central Coast Counties Gas and Electric Company, which is now part of PG&E. With all this activity plus the logging, the area needed a post office. The natives liked Laurel Grove, the name of the inn and the livery stable, and petitioned the Postal Service, but Fred Swanton knew the U.S. Senator. The Swanton Post Office was closed in the late '30's.

The Ocean Shore Railroad was organized to run along the coast between San Francisco and Santa Cruz. Construction was started from both ends, with the north ending at Tunitas Creek, about halfway between Half Moon Bay and Pescadero. The south line was built as far as Swanton. When the S.P. (Southern Pacific) built a parallel line to Davenport, the cement plant business dried up. The San Vicente Lumber Company logged from 1905 to 1923 in the hills behind Swanton and had the Ocean Shore Railroad haul the logs to their mill in Santa Cruz. Much of the redwood was used to rebuild San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake and fire. A daily passenger train ran between Santa Cruz and San Francisco, with the 127 missing miles covered by a Stanley Steamer bus.

The Ocean Shore was also into real estate development, and in 1907 a town called Folger was laid out and approved by the County in the area around the big barn. Apparently the coffee business was on hard times too, because none of the 324 25 by 100 foot lots sold. So, we still grow Bussels sprouts on the corner of Railroad Avenue and Fir Street. In 1922 employees of the Ocean Shore Railroad struck for higher pay, and that was the end of the railroad.

For several years the University of California (Berkeley), College of Engineering, ran summer school here.

Students would come by train and lay out roads and survey land for a summer semester. There are many stories told about cold water, poison oak and snakes, although there are only a few graduates left. (The building by the Red House was built by the engineering students.)

Next issue we will read about the Swanton years of the ranch

Observation Car

Smith, Swanton and Bygone Days - #7
by Hart Fairclough

Al was generous in allowing friends and relatives to enjoy the advantages of his retreat in redwood canyon country. My wife and I can attest to this because of the many times Al let us stay at his cabin for a few days as a get-away from the rush of suburban living in Walnut Creek. Just a little beyond Al's cabin and above the San Vicente roadbed is the Woodwardia cabin. Al's sisters and some of their families spent some weekends and summer time there. During the late 60's and early 70's we took our 4 daughters "camping" at the Woodwardia site. We'd just phone ahead to Al and see if Woodwardia was available and he'd give us the combination to the gate lock that kept the "hippies" out. On one visit my oldest daughter and I killed 2 rattlesnakes 18 hours apart right near Al's cabin.

Al Smith's life took a big turn in the early 1960's as he left education and entered the world of business when his father stepped out at Orchard Supply Hardware Company. Over the next 2-1/2 decades, he showed a natural acumen for the strategy and direction of a hardware business ready for expansion and growth. Under his direction the company grew from one store to over a dozen in California, with around a dozen more on the drawing board for the years ahead. His time and investment in OSH, and the money he acquired as a result of those years, may have surprised some people, but not those who knew him well. Al did not give the appearance of a typical businessman. He was certainly not a smooth talking, sharp dressing, articulate, salesman-like personality. His easy-going, laid-back, country mannerisms could be misleading. Even when we were scouts and were discussing or arguing something, Al's sense of perception and logic were evident. Beneath his outward presence was a very wise, shrewd person.

As the years of the 70's and 80's progressed, Al had the money with which to do the things he wanted to do.

Whether it was to ride a special train in England, or one in Australia, or take a riverboat on the Mississippi, Al's life branched out. But, always close to the front of his mind, was Swanton. He still spent time over at his cabin one mile up above Little Creek, and kept track of possible adjacent land acquisition possibilities. It was this interest that led to the purchase of the piece of property on which he would later build his home on the hill overlooking the ocean and much of his land holdings.

-- to be continued

A bit of RR History as found by Mark Cooper as found on the internet.

The US Standard railroad gauge (distance between the rails) is 4 feet, 8.5 inches. That's an exceedingly odd number. Why was that gauge used? Because that's the way they built them in England, and the US railroads were built by English expatriates. Why did the English people build them like that? Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways, and that's the gauge they used.

Why did "they" use that gauge then? Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools that they used for building wagons, which used that wheel spacing. Okay! Why did the wagons use that odd wheel spacing? Well, if they tried to use any other spacing the wagons would break on some of the old, long distance roads, because that's the spacing of the old wheel ruts.

So who built these old rutted roads? The first long distance roads in Europe were built by Imperial Rome for the benefit of their legions. The roads have been used ever since. And the ruts? The initial ruts, which everyone else had to match for fear of destroying their wagons, were first made by Roman war chariots. Since the chariots were made for or by Imperial Rome they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing.

Thus, we have the answer to the original questions. The United States standard railroad gauge of 4 feet, 8.5 inches derives from the original specification for an Imperial Roman army war chariot. Specs and Bureaucracies live forever. So, the next time you are handed a specification and wonder what horse's ass came up with it, you may be exactly right. Because the Imperial Roman chariots were made to be just wide enough to accommodate the back-ends of two war horses.

Announcing

The Fourth Annual Gold Coast Railroad Antique Show and Sale

Sunday - October 12, 1997
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
\$5.00 Admission

Napredak Hall
770 Montegue Expressway
San Jose, Calif.

Calendar

Oct. 8	Cal Poly work evening
Oct. 11	SPRS workday
Oct. 12	2472 (run)
Oct. 25	SPRS workday
Nov. 5	Cal Poly work evening
Nov. 8	SPRS workday
Nov. 9	Board meeting
Nov. 22	SPRS workday
Dec. 10	Cal Poly work evening
Dec. 13	SPRS workday
Dec. 27	SPRS workday
Dec. 31	New Years Eve Run

Membership

Annual dues to the society is \$25.00 per person. Dues are collected during the first of each year. Any correspondence to this newsletter or change of address and/or phone number should be sent to:

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<http://www.calpoly.edu:80/~ae/swanton/sprs.html>